

B-84

Calvert Station

501 North Calvert Street

Baltimore

Baltimore East Quad

1850

Calvert Station was an Italianate railroad terminal designed by the firm of Niernsee and Neilson for the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad. It was constructed between 1848-1850, and when completed it was the largest railroad terminal in the United States. The train shed was also the largest of its kind, with a clear span of 99 feet supported by Howe trusses. The building was demolished c. 1950 for the construction of the Baltimore *Sun* building.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties Form

Inventory No. B-84

### 1. Name of Property (indicate preferred name)

historic Calvert Station- DEMOLISHED

other

### 2. Location

street and number 501 North Calvert Street

not for publication

city, town Baltimore

vicinity

county

### 3. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name N/A

street and number

telephone

city, town

state

zip code

### 4. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc.

liber

folio

city, town

tax map

tax parcel

tax ID number

### 5. Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☐ Contributing Resource in National Register District
- ☐ Contributing Resource in Local Historic District
- ☐ Determined Eligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☐ Determined Ineligible for the National Register/Maryland Register
- ☒ Recorded by HABS/HAER
- ☐ Historic Structure Report or Research Report at MHT
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

### 6. Classification

Category	Ownership	Current Function	Resource Count	
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape	Contributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce/trade	<input type="checkbox"/> recreation/culture	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> defense	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> site		<input type="checkbox"/> domestic	<input type="checkbox"/> social	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> object		<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
		<input type="checkbox"/> funerary	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> unknown	<input type="checkbox"/> Total
		<input type="checkbox"/> health care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> vacant/not in use	
		<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> other:	
				Number of Contributing Resources previously listed in the Inventory
				0

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## 7. Description

Inventory No. B-84

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### Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> demolished

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Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

Calvert Station was designed by the Baltimore firm of Niernsee & Neilson for the Baltimore & Susquehanna Railroad and was constructed between 1848 and 1850. The station was demolished after 100 years of service, to make way for the headquarters of the Baltimore Sun. The station contained a passenger terminal, a freight office, and the B & S headquarters. Calvert Station was sited toward the southwest corner of the lot, facing the intersection of North Calvert and East Franklin Streets and was executed with Italianate detailing. The 112-foot wide structure was built of brick, stuccoed, with a basement and details in stone. A two-story center block, flanked by three-story towers and single-story gateways comprised the front elevation. The main block had a projecting, three-bay central pavilion, featuring on the first floor a triple doorway with arched transoms, a three arched windows on the second, and a pediment at the roof level. Setbacks on either side of the pavilion contained one arched window on each floor. The roof of the center section was hipped, with chimneys at the ends of the ridge. The towers had arched windows on the first two stories, blind orioles at the level of the cornice of the main block and tall louvered vents above the roof of the main block. The towers were topped by pyramidal roofs with weather vanes. The gateways featured a single story wing with a single arched window, and an arched passage which terminated in piers. The stories of all sections were articulated by stone belt courses. The cornices were bold and featured brackets. The cornice of the central pavilion bore the words "Calvert Station". All roofs were of standing seam metal.

The original floorplan of the station reveals it to have been compact: the triple entrance opened into a center hall leading directly to the train platforms. Two doorways on the left of the hall led to a stairway and a lounge. Beyond the lounge was a ladies lounge, with a water closet in the first floor of the tower. A baggage office occupied the one story portion of the station. Two doors off the right of the hall led to a ticket office and a transportation office. The first floor of the tower contained a vault and the superintendant was housed in the one-story section.

Behind the passenger terminal/ headquarters was a long shed for arriving trains. The shed had a gable roof supported by stout, square, granite piers. The roof was constructed using Howe trusses of wood and iron. Five louvered ventilators pierced the roof at the ridge. The rear elevation was a portal with three archways to permit trains into the shed. The central section of the portal featured a bracketed parapet standing taller than the ridge. A bracketed cornice surmounted the whole.

## 8. Significance

Inventory No. B-84

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below		
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> social history
	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____

**Specific dates** 1850; 1948

**Architect/Builder** Niernsee & Neilson

**Construction dates** 1848-1850

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register

☐ Maryland Register

☒ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

When the Calvert Station opened on June 3, 1850, it was the largest railroad terminal in the United States. Its construction was made possible by Baltimore city officials allowing the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad to bring steam traction deep into the city center at all times of day. Its design by Niernsee and Neilson was a pioneering use of the Italianate for a railroad structure, imitation of which lead to a close association of the style with railroad stations throughout the nation. The station's train shed used wood and iron Howe trusses placed upon a wooden plate providing a 99-foot clear span; the largest for a car house in the country at that time. The roof withstood the blizzard of 1899 and was still in excellent shape when dismantled. The demolition of the station took place between 1948 and 1950, to make way for the new headquarters for the Baltimore *Sun*.

The architectural firm of Niernsee and Neilson was established in 1848. Architect John R. Niernsee emigrated from his native Austria in 1836 and immediately began work as an engineer for railroads, eventually working for B.H. Latrobe Jr as a draftsman at the B & O Railroad in Baltimore. In 1839, Niernsee met James C. Neilson while working for the B & O in Cumberland. Neilson, though born in Baltimore, was raised principally in England, but returned to Maryland to study engineering at St. Mary's College. The firm of Niernsee and Neilson began after two years of independent practice by Niernsee, during which he built two houses for Latrobe. Niernsee required assistance in handling his flourishing practice, and Neilson proved to be an excellent choice, bringing experience in both engineering and construction management. The partnerships handled numerous commissions in Baltimore, including prominent homes, churches and hotels and lasted until 1856, when Niernsee moved to South Carolina. The pair re-partnered between 1865 and 1874.

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## 9. Major Bibliographical References

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Inventory No. B-84

Chalfant, Randolph W. and Charles Belfoure, *Niernsee and Neilson, Architects of Baltimore: Tow Careers on the Edge of the Future*, Baltimore: Baltimore Architecture Foundation, 2006.

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## 10. Geographical Data

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Acreage of surveyed property 2.97 acres  
Acreage of historical setting 2.97 acres  
Quadrangle name Baltimore East

Quadrangle scale: \_\_\_\_\_

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Verbal boundary description and justification

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## 11. Form Prepared by

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name/title	Thomas A. Reinhart, Administrator of Architectural Research		
organization	Maryland Historical Trust	date	February 22, 2011
street & number	100 Community Place	telephone	410-514-7645
city or town	Crownsville	state	MD

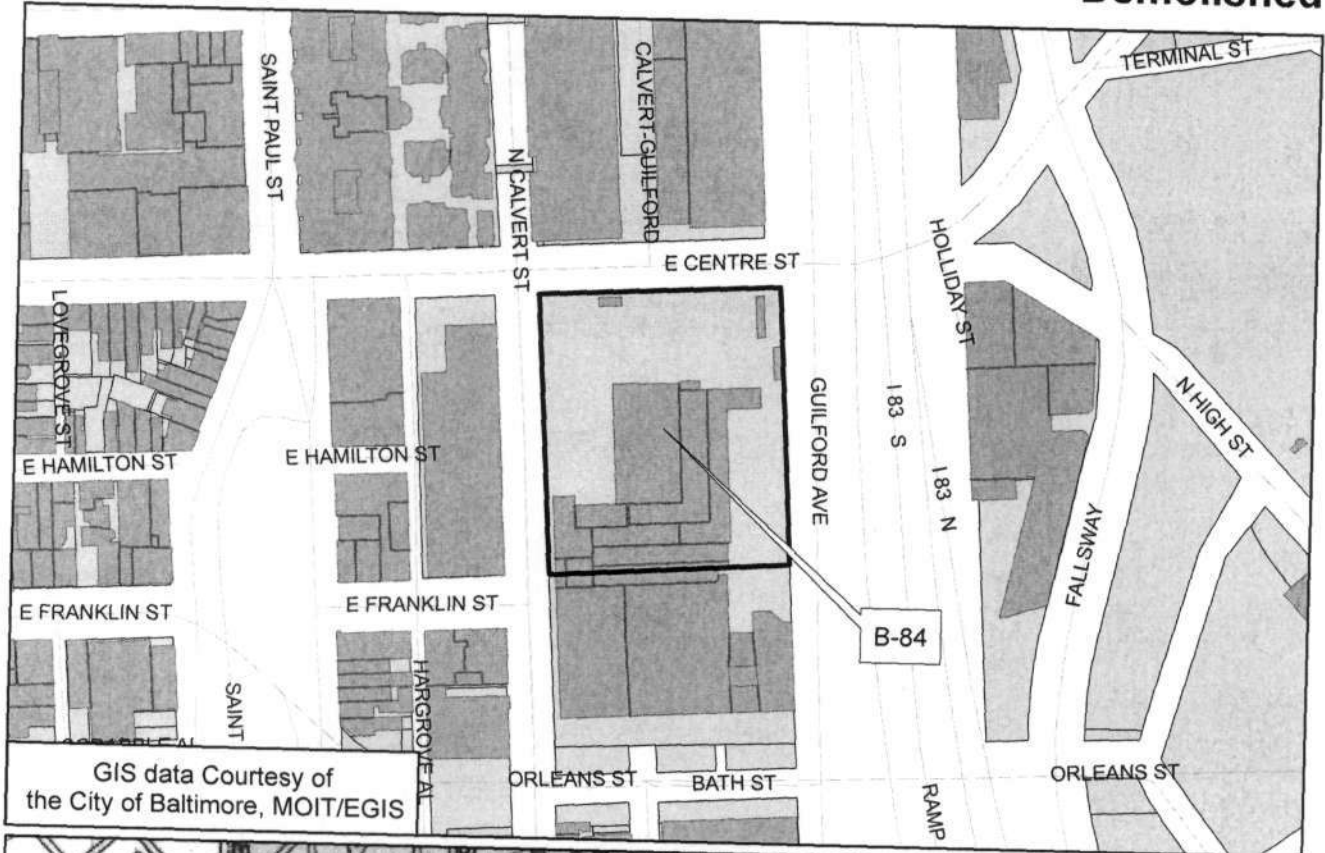
The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

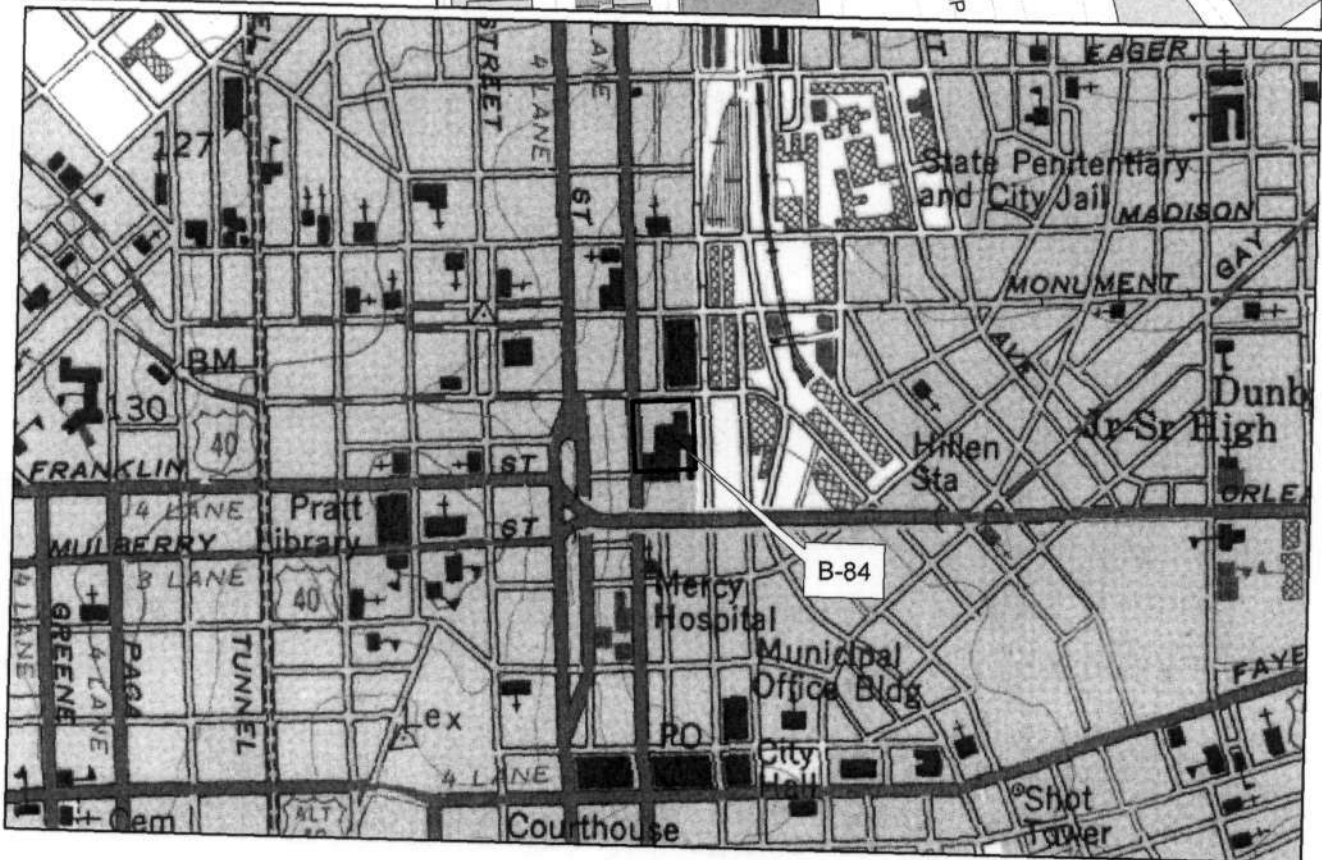
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Maryland Department of Planning  
100 Community Place  
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023  
410-514-7600

B-84  
Calvert Station  
501 N. Calvert Street  
Block 0554 Lot 001  
Baltimore City  
Baltimore East Quad

**Demolished**

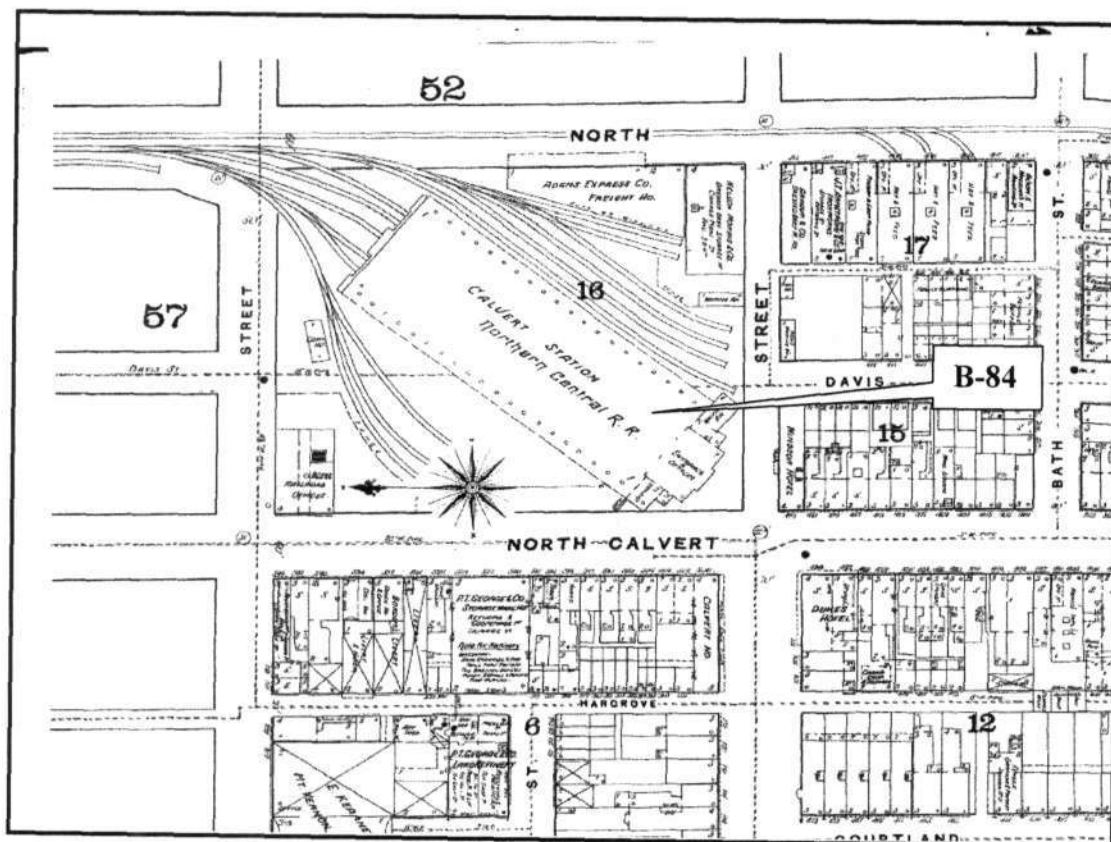


GIS data Courtesy of  
the City of Baltimore, MOIT/EGIS

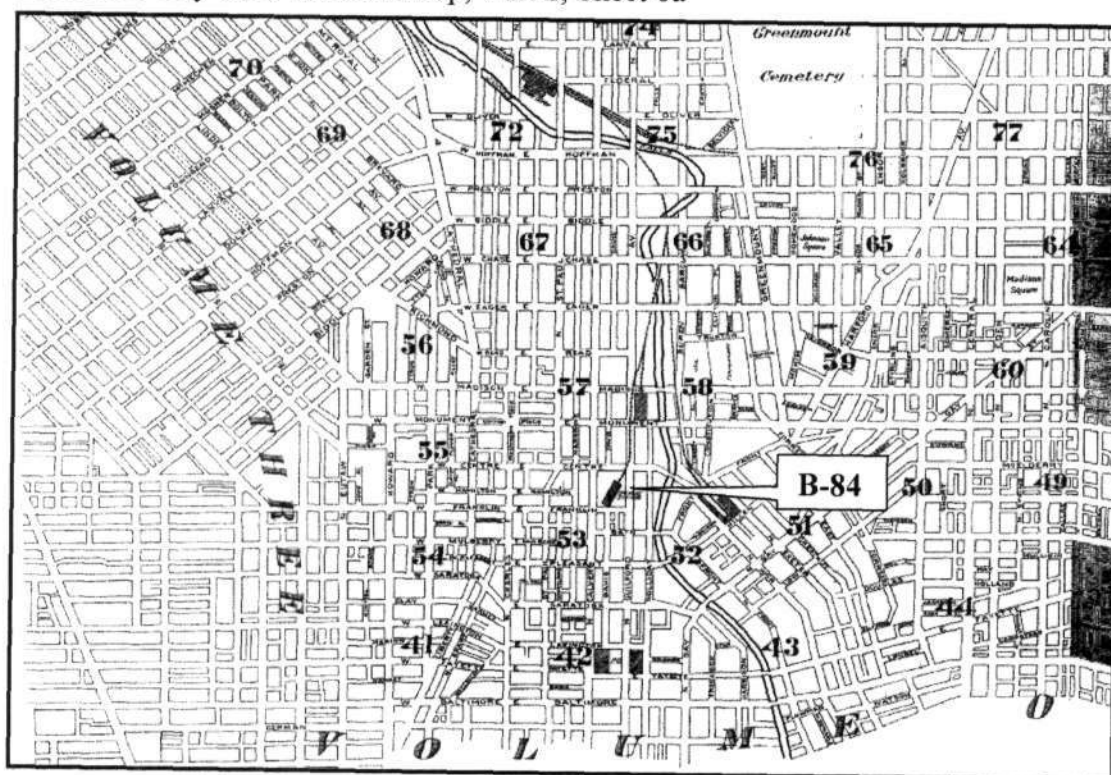


B-84  
 Calvert Station  
 501 North Calvert Street  
 Baltimore City 1890 Sanborn Map, Vol. 2, Sheet 52

Demolished



Baltimore City 1890 Sanborn Map, Vol. 2, Sheet 0a



**REVISIONS**

LOT 1 PER FIELD C.S.H. 80-082  
 LOTS 2, 3 & 4 PER DEED (P.L.S.) C.S.H. 80-230  
 LOT 1A IMP. ONLY PER APP. CH. SH. 91-128

539

E. CENTRE ST.

ST.

ST.

AVE.

553

501

6

615'-5 1/2"

4.654 AC.

621'-0 1/2"

6

I-83 SOUTH



1254

E. FRANKLIN ST

N. CALVERT

GUILFORD

SHEETS IN SET-2  
 SH. No. 1

583

ORLEANS BATH

ST. VIADUCT

NOTICE

THIS IS A REAL PROPERTY PLAT AS PROVIDED  
 FOR UNDER ARTICLE 76(d) OF THE CITY CHARTER  
 IT IS COMPILED FROM TITLE AND OTHER  
 SOURCES AND IS NOT AN AUTHENTIC SURVEY.

CITY OF BALTIMORE  
 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

PROPERTY LOCATION DIVISION

WARD 11 SECTION 11

BLOCK 554

SCALE 1"=50' DATE OCT. 1979

TRACED BY D.C.

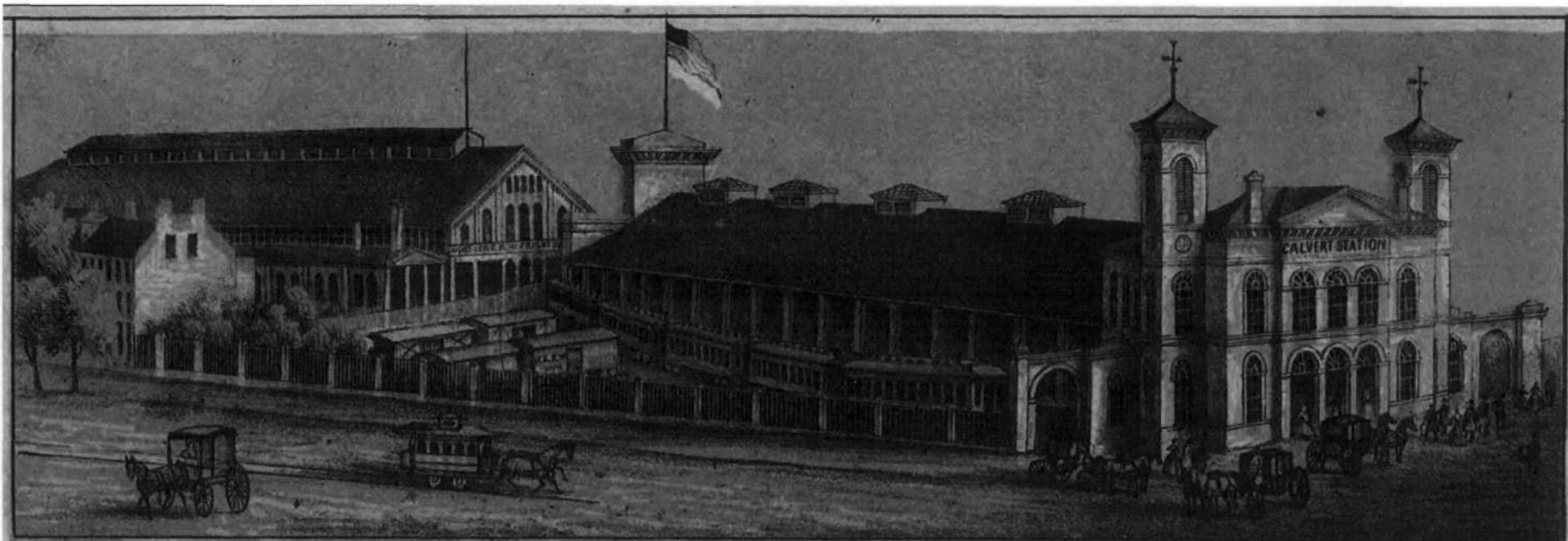
LETTERED BY D.C.

CHECKED BY

DAVIS ST.

584

585



**CALVERT STATION. NORTHERN CENTRAL RAIL WAY, N. E. COR. FRANKLIN & CALVERT STREETS.**

Calvert Station, 1869 E. Sachse & Co.'s Bird's Eye View of Baltimore



MD, 4 BALT, 40-1

HABS

B-84

Calvert Station

HABS Photo (MD 4, BALT 40-1)

EH Pickering

July 1936

Main Facade



MD. 4. BALT. 40-2

HAB5

B-84

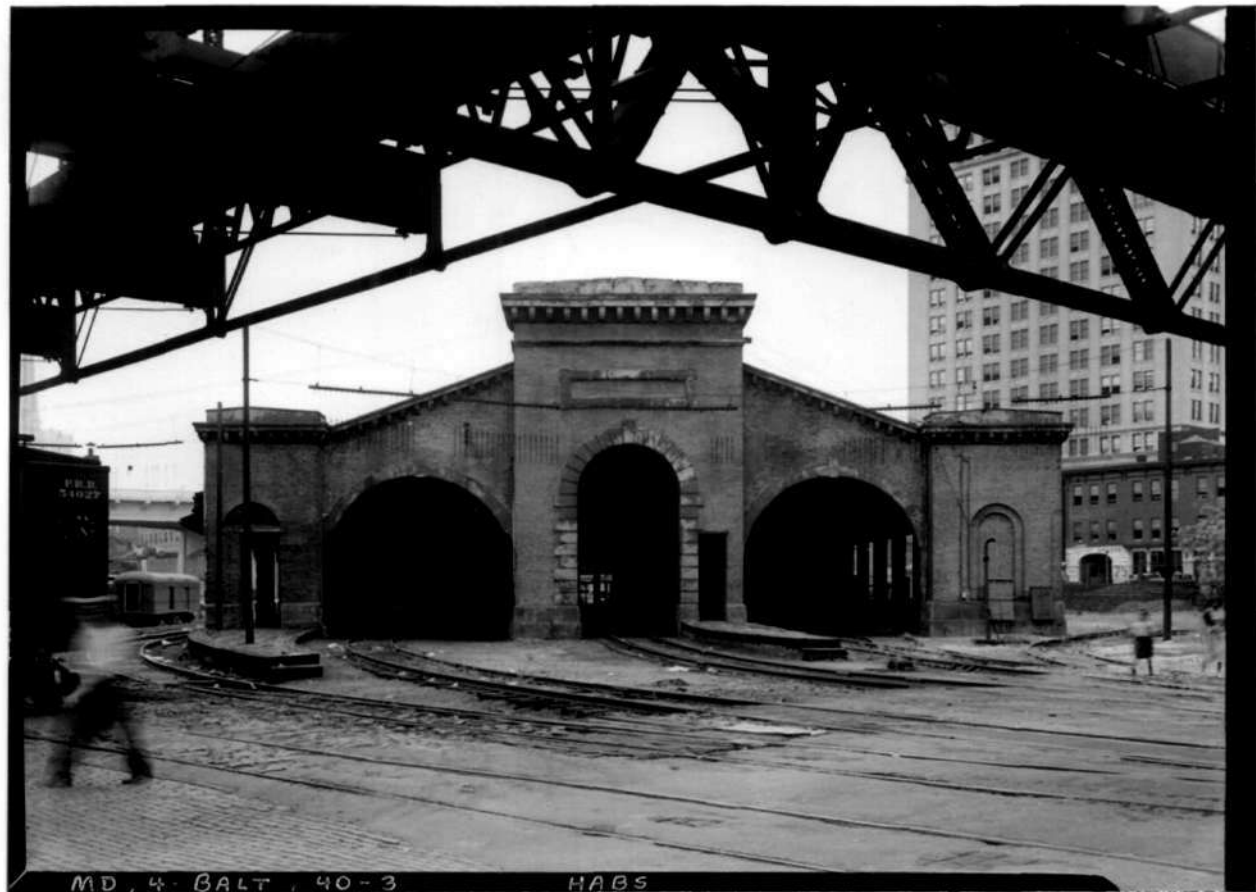
Calvert Station

HABS Photo (MD 4, BALT 40-2)

EH Pickering

JULY 1936

Detail of Main Doorway



MD, 4-BALT, 40-3

HAB5

B-84

CALVERT STATION

HABS PHOTO (MD4, BALT 40-3)

E-H. PICKERING

JULY 1936

NORTH END TRAIN SHED



MD, 4. BALT. 40-4

HABS

B-84

CALVERT STATION

HABS PHOTO (MD 4 BALT 40-4)

E. H. PICKERING

JULY 1936

TRAIN SHED